

Households Battered by a Lack of Services

By Donelle Molambo

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The South African constitution guarantees basic human rights and promises to make basic services accessible to poor households, at least. Despite this, Eldorado Park, Slovo Park, and Kliptown display a gross lack of services and state neglect.

Although the country has been governed to ensure critical sectors are developed to make it possible to provide these services, which citizens are entitled to, accessing them has not happened as it should.

Lying in Johannesburg's Region G, Eldorado Park is divided into 2 wards: Ward 17 and Ward 18. There are two councillors elected by the community to assist the community in receiving services, such as basic water supply, ensuring indigent homes receive some free electricity, and so on.

Residents feel that the city regularly fails to set aside an adequate budget to ensure maintenance is done in the area. Often, when there is an issue with the water supply or leaks are reported, the turnaround time does not match the delivery time.

The township is dotted with poor sanitation. Residents say that this underpins health issues affecting community members. Some fear that poor health conditions threaten even the lives of the only people who work in households. "If the breadwinner so happens to fall ill or loses his or her job, then what?" asked one resident.

The concern is tied to a high rate of unemployment in Eldorado Park. Joblessness is a contributing factor to crime and gender-based violence; "we therefore plead to the government at large."

The government must respect the constitution, which binds everyone. They must provide the resources that communities need. "It is our constitutional right that we should not be a statistic before our matter is heard."

The residents say that there should not have to be deaths before they are assisted and their basic rights respected. Clean water supply and sanitation are the right of communities.

"Do not ignore us while our taps are running for hours, wasting water, while my brother next door has to find an abandoned house in the community to collect and carry water. We know our rights to these services so well that you must provide them."

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